

FRANKLIN TOWNSHIP PLANNING AREA

CRITICAL AREA TEXT ADOPTED MARCH 15, 2006

1. Five Points Road & Southeastern Avenue

Why Critical: This area is notable as a small, 1920s-era commercial crossroads. It also is an area with vacant land, land under transition and established residential uses. In addition to the historic commercial structures, there are a number of historic homes in this area including the notable circa 1875 Italianate home at 7102 Southeastern Avenue. This area has the potential to become a strong focal point and neighborhood center for nearby residential neighborhoods and those now under construction.

It is critical to conserve the historic commercial crossroads nature in this area, hence the Village Mixed-Use designation for the area north of Southeastern Avenue. It is also critical that as this area makes the transition to a larger, modern commercial center on the south side of Southeastern Avenue that the existing homes are not unduly disrupted.

Recommendations:

- Provide for community commercial, office commercial and residential land uses that are scaled to be compatible within a walkable neighborhood.
- Future development in the village mixed use area should be similar in scale as the Waterman Hardware building, while still maintaining sufficient set back for any needed right-of-way.
- Create network of safe pedestrian linkages to established neighborhoods and the existing elementary school. Enhance connections to surrounding area with clear and safe pedestrian and bicycle access.
- Investigate potential transit oriented development, with residential densities of 5-15 within the village mixed use area.
- Discourage drive-through windows and other automobile intensive land uses within the village mixed use area.
- Develop design standards, restrict or prohibit billboards along Five Points Road and Southeastern Avenue, create a cohesive and positive image for all Southeastern Avenue.
- New commercial development should have a unified plan to avoid piecemeal development.
- Provide a transition between Community Commercial uses and existing homes on Payne Road by limiting new buildings to residential scale in the border areas. Use only low level signage and shield lighting to minimize impact on residential uses to the north, south and east.
- During the period of transition from residential uses to commercial uses on the south side of Southeastern Avenue, standard transitional yards and buffer areas should be provided.

2. Wanamaker – Village Mixed Use

Why critical: The town of Wanamaker originally developed as a distinct village. Over the years, the City of Indianapolis has grown out to meet it. To maintain Wanamaker's identity as a distinct place it has been designated as Village Mixed Use. To retain the small town character of Wanamaker it is critical to protect the current development patterns (mix of land uses; and the size, shape and location of buildings on their sites). It is also critical to preserve the existing residential neighborhoods of Wanamaker. Residents have potentially good connectivity to Wanamaker Elementary School, neighborhood retail, and office-oriented businesses.

Recommendations:

- Development along Southeastern Avenue should continue to be a mix of retail, office, civic and residential uses. Sidewalks should be incorporated in any new development. Any new parking lots should be encouraged to locate behind buildings fronting on Southeastern Avenue.
- Future development within the critical area should incorporate the existing pattern of streets, lots and sidewalks.
- Maintain existing grid, scale, and siting of buildings on lots.
- Pedestrian linkages should be provided with any new development to connect residential areas and to reduce dependency of automobile in the immediate village area.
- Small-scale neighborhood based commercial should be encouraged along Post Road south of the proposed Hanna Road extension.
- Restrict encroachment of commercial uses into the solidly residential neighborhoods of Wanamaker Estates and Summerhill.
- Pedestrian connectivity should be strengthened throughout the critical area by the construction and upkeep of sidewalks, paths, and safe street crossings.
- The large parcel at 4437 Clark, located east of Franklin Road, is approximately 40 acres. This parcel is currently zoned DA and will most likely be rezoned. An integrated shopping center of a scale compatible with the village character is a potential use here. Any freestanding uses should maintain building mass and scale similar to existing retail structures in the village. Retail uses should be discouraged along the frontage of Franklin Road. Uses along this frontage should be restricted to Office Commercial uses with buildings of a residential scale or residential uses. A larger-scaled structure may be considered for this site provided the site is designed in a pedestrian friendly manner and that the parking area is heavily landscape on both the interior and exterior of the parking lot. It is preferred that a portion of this parcel be designed for outside civic uses such as a bandstand, open-air park, farmers market, or associated with Old Settler's Day.
- Preserve the corridor and encourage the construction of the Hanna Avenue missing thoroughfare segment to divert heavy traffic away from McGaughey Road towards the Post Road interchange.
- The high quality woodland, located at 9220 Vandergriff Road, is designated as environmentally sensitive and should be preserved to the extent possible.

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- Avoid major encroachments of development along Big Run Creek and designate it as a stream conservation area as designated in the Franklin Township Connectivity Plan. Measures should be taken to preserve the tree canopy and vegetated streambanks with any land development abutting this stream.
- Develop the proposed pedestrian/bicycle pathways on Franklin Road, Southeastern Avenue, Bazil Avenue, and Hanna Avenue as shown in the Franklin Township Connectivity Plan.
- Develop the Northeastern Avenue proposed bike lane as shown in the Franklin Township Connectivity Plan.

3. Emerson Avenue – Thompson Road to Copper Lane
(This Critical Area will be combined into a single Critical Area with the adopted text for Perry Township.)

RECOMMENDATIONS

Why Critical: Emerson Avenue is planned for widening and other improvements to deal with its current and future traffic volumes. The land use plan recommends a mixture of office commercial, community commercial and residential uses on the east side of Emerson Avenue. Many residential parcels of varying sizes line the corridor from Shelbyville Road southward to Little Buck Creek. It is critical that these areas are developed in a manner that is sensitive to the remaining residential areas.

Recommendations:

- New commercial and office commercial should be integrated, well buffered from the neighboring residences.
- New commercial and office commercial should have consolidated access points onto Emerson Avenue, Edgewood Avenue and Shelbyville Road to preserve the traffic carrying capacity of these streets.
- Use only low level signage, and shield lighting to avoid spillage onto neighboring properties if directly adjacent to residential properties.

4. Edgewood Avenue & Arlington Avenue

Why Critical: The south side of Edgewood Avenue from Arlington Avenue east to Irwin Street contains several dozen large parcels occupied by only a few houses. This situation portends conversion to more intensive land uses in the future. Other large parcels surrounding this area have been converted to residential subdivisions, resulting in ready access to water and sewer services. Many of the parcels are ¼ mile deep but are relatively narrow.

Recommendations:

- Encourage unified development planning to consolidate individual driveways into fewer new streets and access points on Edgewood Avenue.
- Encourage infill development plans that require dedication of street right of way and hasten the improvement of Arlington Avenue and Edgewood Avenue per Marion

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County Thoroughfare Plan standards and proposed greenway along Edgewood Avenue.

- Provide for sidewalk and street connections to schools, parks and other pedestrian destinations in the area.
- Retain established trees and preserve the natural qualities of the Buckley Ditch.

5. Southport Road – Emerson Avenue to Arlington Avenue

Why Critical: Commercial land use along Southport Road east of I-65 was nonexistent in the early 1990's. Most of the land in this corridor was used for large residential parcels and agriculture. The intersection of Southport Road and Emerson Avenue has experienced a rapid conversion to commercial uses in recent years. The north side of Southport Road, east of Emerson Avenue, now show signs of strong pressures to extend commercial land use even further. It is essential that a stable border be established between commercial and multi-family land uses on the west end of this corridor and established large residential tracts in the east half of this corridor.

Recommendations:

- Restrict non-residential land uses to those areas as shown in the land use plan. The eastern edge of the office commercial land use should not extend beyond the east property line of the Windsor Lakes apartments, located on the southside of Southport Road.
- Provide that the office commercial land use serves as a transition between existing and proposed community commercial land uses by limiting buildings to residential scale. Use only low level signage and shield lighting to minimize impact on residential uses to the north and east.
- In the area of office commercial and 3.5 to 5 residential density, provide front yard setbacks and landscaped front yards comparable to those required for Windsor Lakes, Sycamore Run and Misty Woods on the southside of Southport Road. The eastern boundary of the 3.5 to 5 residential density should contain a minimum 30 foot side yard setback where it adjoins the 0 to 1.75 density residential.
- Preserve the integrity of Southport Road by consolidating access points in new development projects.
- Protect the steep slopes and other environmentally sensitive areas of the Little Buck Creek valley. Provide tree planting on sloped areas and floodplain areas as part of any development plans.
- Prohibit commercial uses at the intersection of Arlington Avenue and Southport Road.
- The office commercial area should be integrated, well buffered from the neighboring residential areas to the north and east.

6. Southport Road & Franklin Road

Why Critical: As Franklin Township continues to experience urban development, it is essential to identify sites where significant commercial and office centers can thrive. The intersection of Southport Road and Franklin Road has no commercial land use now but offers the potential for assembling community commercial and office commercial uses. Given the tendency for residential development to locate well in advance of commercial and office uses, it is critical that important intersections be reserved with sites of size and orientation to meet future commercial needs.

Recommendations:

- Strongly resist approval of additional residential land uses on the four corners of Southport Road and Franklin Road. Encourage land use approvals that will make the transition of these parcels from farming and scattered residential uses to Community Commercial and Office Commercial uses.
- Create a strong visual identity for this intersection, which lies near the center of Franklin Township.
- Provide safe and attractive pedestrian and bicycle pathways within development plans and integrate the Indianapolis Parks Department's proposed Greenway and Stream Conservation Plan with the community commercial, office commercial, special use and residential land uses.
- Preserve the high quality woodland on the south side of Southport Road. This woodland is located approximately ½ mile east of Franklin Road.
- Each Community Commercial and Office Commercial site should have a unified plan to avoid piecemeal development.
- The proposed Office Commercial uses north of the Edenwilde subdivision should have generous landscaping along Southport Road. Provide that the Office Commercial land use serves as a transition between the proposed Community Commercial land uses along Franklin Road by limiting buildings to residential scale. Use only low level signage and shield lighting to minimize impact on residential uses to the north, south and west. Provide for vehicular and pedestrian connectivity to parcels to the west as part of the development plan for this site.
- The proposed Office Commercial land uses on the southwest corner of Southport Road and Franklin Road should provide buffering next to the Edenwilde subdivision.
- The proposed Community Commercial on the southeast corner of Franklin Road and Southport Road should be buffered on the side of the McGregor Highlands subdivision and any future residential uses to the south and east. The development plan for this site should provide for vehicular and pedestrian connectivity to parcels to the east and south but should discourage through traffic for trucks and deliveries.

CRITICAL AREA #7

7. I-74 - Post Road Interchange – Troy Avenue Corridor

Why Critical:

The I-74 / Post Road Interchange offers great potential for regionally significant commercial, office and light industrial development. Although the land east of Post and north of I-74 remains largely agricultural, it is essential that this area be protected from residential encroachments that will negate the potential for land uses that will stimulate jobs and a balanced property tax base. Given the access to the interstate highway system and from Post Road, this land must be preserved for well-planned and integrated office, commercial and light industrial sites. Nearby residential land uses must be protected from possible adverse effects of commercial and industrial operations.

Recommendations:

East of Post Road

- Encourage unified development of the land east of Post Road and south of Troy Avenue
- The primary vehicular access points to this area should be from Post Road. Future access points to Troy Avenue should be restricted to serving a limited number of office commercial uses and should prohibit semi-truck through traffic.
- The light industrial uses and highway commercial uses should be developed as an integrated center.
- Site development plans should integrate the proposed greenway in the electrical transmission corridor as shown in the Franklin Township Connectivity Plan
- Restrict retail uses to the Post Road side of the property. Retail uses should not be allowed on the Troy Road corridor or near the areas of Davis Road and Vandergriff Road.
- Closely coordinate planning and development of the south end of this site with the Indiana Department of Transportation during the planned interchange modifications of the I-74 / Post Road interchange. Provide for an attractive gateway to the Post Road corridor beginning in the interchange area and continuing northward.
- Create new streets and improve existing streets to be suitable for trucking, customer and employee traffic.
- Truck parking, docks and maneuvering areas in the light industrial area should be screened from the office commercial and nearby residential areas.
- All parcels shown as light industrial should be developed in a compatible way, as one project if possible, and avoiding piecemeal development.
- The area should be planned to include considerations for potential mass transit services to serve both residential areas and employment centers. Sidewalks and bicycle paths should facilitate access to future mass transit services.
- Place taller structures and more intensive light industrial activities centrally within the overall site away from any adjoining residential areas. Structures in the office commercial area abutting Troy Avenue should not exceed in height the maximum height of adjoining residential zoning districts.

- Located within the parcel at 9405 East Troy Avenue there is a high quality woodlands designated as environmentally sensitive. This woodland should be preserved to every extent possible. Recommended office commercial uses in this area should include the woodland as an open space amenity. Preserving this woodland will serve as a natural buffer to the recommended light industrial uses to the west.
- The southern edge of the area recommended as light industrial near Vandergriff Road should not have trucking access to this road but access for emergency response may be allowed.
- Where the office commercial land use abuts residential areas, new buildings should be built to residential scale. Use only low level signage and shield lighting to minimize impact on residential uses to the north, south and east. New buildings in the office commercial area should have finished facades on all sides.
- An increased transitional area is encouraged along the edge of the office commercial area which abuts land recommended for 0 to 1.75 Residential Units per Acre on the west side of Davis Road. This area should contain earth berms and extensive landscaping.
- A transitional area of two hundred feet in depth is encouraged along the southern edge of the light industrial area that abuts residential lots along Vandergriff Road. This area should contain earth berms and extensive landscaping.

West of Post Road

- Located within the parcel known as 8721 East Troy Avenue, is a high quality woodland designated as environmentally sensitive. This woodland should be preserved to the extent possible. Site planning for this area should include the woodland as an open space amenity. Preserving this woodland will serve as a natural buffer between the recommended light industrial and heavy commercial uses to the south and future residential uses north of Troy Avenue.
- Site plans should be compatible with the special use area at the corner of Post Road and Troy Avenue.
- Site plans should protect future residential areas on north side of Troy Avenue in Warren Township.

8. Maze Road and Mitthoefer Road

Why Critical: As Franklin Township continues to experience urban development, it is essential to identify sites where conveniently located commercial and office centers can thrive. This intersection offers the potential to secure such sites well in advance of the time that agricultural land is converted to predominately residential land uses.

Recommendations:

- Strongly resist approval of residential land uses on the four corners of Maze Road and Mitthoefer Road.
- Create a strong visual identity for this intersection.

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- Provide safe and attractive pedestrian and bicycle pathways within residential areas and linkages to park, retail and office destinations.

9. Acton

Why critical: The town of Acton originally developed as a distinct village. Over the years, the City of Indianapolis has grown out to meet it. To maintain Acton's identity as a distinct place it has been designated as Village Mixed Use. To retain the small town character of Acton it is critical to protect the current development patterns (mix of land uses; and the size, shape and location of buildings on their sites). It is also critical to preserve the existing residential neighborhoods of Acton. Residents have potentially good connectivity to Acton Elementary School, neighborhood retail, and several proposed parks.

Recommendations:

- Development along Exchange Street should continue to be a mix of residential, retail, office, and civic. Sidewalks should be incorporated in any new development.
- Small-scale neighborhood based commercial should be encouraged along Acton Road south of Southport Road.
- Future development within the critical area should incorporate the existing pattern of streets, lots and sidewalks.
- Maintain existing grid, scale, and siting of buildings on lots.
- Pedestrian linkages should be provided with any new development to connect residential areas to reduce dependency of automobile in the immediate village area.
- Pedestrian connectivity should be strengthened throughout the critical area by the construction and upkeep of sidewalks, paths, and safe street crossings.
- The large parcel at 7901 Caswell Street, located east of Acton, is approximately 29 acres. This parcel is currently zoned DA and will most likely be rezoned. It is preferred that a portion of this parcel be designed for outside civic uses such as a bandstand, open-air park, farmers market, and public access be allowed to Buck Creek.
- The designated Office Commercial use at 10800 East McGregor Road should be developed as a single project office park, and not piecemeal development. If any new development for this site is unable to adhere to the Office Commercial recommendation, the Village Mixed-Use type uses should be allowed instead.
- Avoid any encroachment of development along Wildcat Run and designate it as a stream conservation area as in the Franklin Township Connectivity Plan.
- Develop the proposed pedestrian/bicycle pathways on Acton and McGregor Roads as shown in the Franklin Township Connectivity Plan.
- Develop a greenway along Buck Creek as shown in the Franklin Township Connectivity Plan and Greenways Plan.
- The steep slopes designated, as environmentally sensitive along Buck Creek and Wildcat Run should be disturbed as little as possible to help prevent soil erosion.

10. I-74 – Pleasant View Interchange Area

Why Critical: Franklin Township needs large light industrial sites, protected from residential encroachment and with easy access to the interstate highway system. This is essential to assure that the township benefits from industrial tax base and access to jobs.

Recommendations:

- Closely coordinate planning and development of this site with Shelby County agencies and the Indiana Department of Transportation to create roads suitable for trucking and employee traffic.
- All four parcels shown as light industrial should be developed in a compatible way, as one project if possible, and avoid piecemeal development.
- Any new light industrial development should be integrated, well buffered from any neighboring residences, use only low level signage, and shield lighting to avoid spillage onto neighboring properties.
- Include planning for potential mass transit services to serve both residential areas and employment centers.
- Protect established residences and preserve the wooded character along Carroll Road, McGregor Road and along Buck Creek by establishing an internal street system in the light industrial area.
- Place taller structures and more intensive light industrial activities centrally within the overall site away from any adjoining residential areas.
- Develop a greenway along Buck Creek as shown in the Franklin Township Connectivity Plan and Greenways Plan.
- The high quality woodlands designated, as environmentally sensitive, located at 7400 South Carroll Road, should be preserved to the extent possible.
- Provide for public access to the proposed Buck Creek greenway from the light industrial area.